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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS (continued)

1. Mr. SIAM (Lebanon) said that on the eve of the twenty-first century, mankind seemed poised to renounce strife and to divert the thrust of science and technology from destructive uses to the service of humanity and prosperity. The First Committee was called upon not only to work for disarmament, but to ensure that peace and stability prevailed in the post-cold-war world.

2. As a founding Member of the United Nations, and despite the bloody wars its people had endured, Lebanon remained convinced that international relations should be governed by the principles of peace, democracy, freedom, sovereignty and peaceful cooperation. The peace which was being ushered in in the Middle East, albeit haltingly, should be predicated on justice and respect for the sovereignty and independence of all countries of the region and the legitimate rights of their peoples, and should stem not from the prevention of wars and the imposition of military security, but from the respect, despite their cultural, confessional and intellectual differences, of humans and States for their fellows, rather than from resolutions. Lebanon was determined to begin a new chapter in its hitherto dark history by rebuilding its internal peace and security, which were inseparable, while paying due regard to regional and international developments affecting peace and security overall.

3. At the international level, disarmament was essential to the achievement of peace and security. The United Nations had a growing role to play in the establishment of the new world order, and Member States must provide the Organization with the means necessary for it to assume its responsibilities. His delegation commended the efforts of the Secretary-General to implement the ideas contained in his reports, "An Agenda for Peace" and "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", and to find ways of strengthening confidence-building measures and developing monitoring and arms control.

4. Lebanon was grateful to the Secretariat for the emergency mission to improve security and provide humanitarian assistance undertaken in July 1993 by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, following the devastating Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon and the western Bekaa.

5. His delegation welcomed the decision by the Conference on Disarmament to give the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT), as well as the decision by the President of the United States of America to extend the self-imposed United States nuclear-test ban, which augured well for the reaching of an agreement on a comprehensive test ban within a reasonable space of time.

6. Lebanon looked forward to the 1995 Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and hoped that that review conference would result in an agreement strengthening the Treaty by extending it either indefinitely or for an additional fixed period or periods. In that connection, he urged all States to accede to the Treaty as soon as

(Mr. Siam, Lebanon)

possible and to open all their nuclear facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

7. His country reiterated its support for General Assembly resolutions 47/52 L on transparency in armaments and 46/36 L establishing the Register of Conventional Arms. The data provided for the Register should also include information on national arms production.

8. Lebanon welcomed the proposal of Ambassador O'Sullivan, regarding the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, and was confident that the difficulties posed by such expansion could be overcome.

9. At the regional level, the fiercest and longest conflict in the Middle East had been that between the Arab countries and Israel. The climate of international détente and reconciliation following the end of the cold war offered the Arab countries a unique opportunity to escape from the maelstrom of war and confrontation in which they had been caught since the foundation of Israel. Lebanon had joined the peace process sponsored by the United States and the Russian Federation on the basis of full implementation of Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). The internal peace and security of Lebanon could not be achieved without peace and security in the Arab region. The peace process launched at Madrid and culminating in the Washington agreement on Gaza and Jericho appeared uncertain, with peace at times seemingly within reach, and at others still far off. Separate and partial solutions could only engender fresh conflicts. It was not enough to end the state of war or to impose security on the region; peace must be built on a firm and equitable basis in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

10. Peace in the Middle East required confidence-building, for which a prerequisite was the accession of Israel to the NPT. Israel's continued development and production of nuclear weapons and testing of delivery systems, as well as its refusal to abide by Security Council resolution 487 (1981) calling upon it to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, were detrimental to the peace process and regional peace and stability. Accession by Israel to the NPT would help to bring about a climate of trust and encourage other countries in the region also to accede to the Treaty. Banning the possession, use or threat of use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons was part of the unified, integrated and indivisible concept of a global ban on weapons of mass destruction, without which there could be no peace and security. Until such time as a CTBT could be concluded, all States should accede to and abide by all the existing treaties on disarmament, in particular the NPT, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

11. Lebanon renewed its appeal to the Arab countries to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, taking into account the report of the Secretary-General at the previous session, which had reiterated that the establishment of the zone should come eventually as a result of building sufficient confidence among the principal actors in the region.

(Mr. Siam, Lebanon)

12. Peace and stability in the region necessitated a withdrawal by Israel from southern Lebanon and Lebanon's recovery of full sovereignty over its national territory, in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). Nor should the international community forget the plight of the hundreds of Lebanese detainees unjustly held by Israel despite numerous pleas by the Commission on Human Rights and Amnesty International. Israel had refused to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross and relatives access to those detainees. While expressing his appreciation for the efforts of the United Nations and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to maintain stability in southern Lebanon, his country fully expected to recover its territories occupied by Israel and to reestablish its complete sovereignty in the interests of peace and security in the region.

13. Ms. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhstan supported the view of the Secretary-General in his report "New dimensions of arms control and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" regarding the need to review the methods for resolving arms control and disarmament problems in the post-confrontational era. Her delegation felt that the Committee's decision to consider disarmament in the context of other aspects of international security was fully justified; it was clear that without progress in solving political and economic problems, it would be impossible to achieve a breakthrough in arms control and disarmament at either the regional or the global level.

14. The decision by the Conference on Disarmament to give its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty was a significant achievement. One of the first acts of Kazakhstan had been to promulgate a decree on the closing of the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing area. As a result of 466 tests in all spheres, there had been enormous damage to the health of the population over a broad area, and about a half a million Kazahk nationals had been affected. Kazakhstan unconditionally supported a complete ban on nuclear tests at the international level. In August 1993, its President had put forward an initiative to extend to the year 2005 the moratorium on tests of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and all types of weapons of mass destruction. Kazakhstan also planned an initiative to establish a single global register of victims of nuclear explosions and atomic incidents which could be maintained by the World Health Organization or by an international environmental organization.

15. Having signed the Lisbon Protocol, in May 1992, Kazakhstan, along with other successor States to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, had become party to START-I and undertook to accede to NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. That obligation had been confirmed at a recent meeting between the President of Kazakhstan and the Secretary of State of the United States. Kazakhstan was currently engaged in negotiations with a number of countries on cooperation in discharging its obligations to eliminate strategic offensive weapons, for which purpose it needed not only financial but also technological, engineering and environmental assistance. In September 1993, Kazakhstan had become a member of IAEA and assumed the obligations involved in membership of that organization.

16. Kazakhstan welcomed the decision by the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-Nuclear-Weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear

(Ms. Arystanbekova, Kazakhstan)

Weapons. Kazakhstan had been one of the original signatories of the Chemical Weapons Convention; efforts must now be made by the entire international community to ensure the effective and successful achievement of the Convention's goals. Kazakhstan was in favour of actively involving new States in the disarmament negotiating processes and believed that the Conference on Disarmament should be open to all countries which wished to become members.

17. Kazakhstan attached great importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as a further step in strengthening trust, greater openness and transparency in military matters. It had provided the appropriate information to the Register, which, while it could not be a substitute for arms reduction could contribute to confidence-building measures, especially at the regional and subregional levels.

18. Mr. AL-THOUR (Yemen) said that Yemen's foreign policy was aimed at reinforcing global peace and security in keeping with the purposes of the United Nations Charter. Before the advent of the twenty-first century, the international community must establish and promote peace, security and development. Disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear and chemical weapons, were the most crucial issues. The NPT was one of the cornerstones of a peaceful and secure future, and Yemen called on all countries that had not yet done so to accede to the Treaty.

19. Yemen had signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, which would lay the foundations for peace and security in the world, and hoped that other countries which had not yet done so would sign it. He noted with satisfaction the agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation to reduce stockpiles of strategic weapons. Yemen welcomed the proposals in the report "An Agenda for Peace" because peace and security had become extremely important in the post-cold-war era. The problem of armaments in the world derived from the proliferation of conflicts; resources had been used to acquire armaments at the expense of social and economic development.

20. Yemen was keen to establish relations of good-neighbourliness; it had taken steps to resolve its border conflict with Oman, and had also entered into negotiations with Saudi Arabia. It participated in efforts aimed at establishing peace and creating opportunities for negotiation and dialogue with the countries of the region in order to maintain peace on the basis of respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs.

21. As a littoral State of the Indian Ocean, Yemen called on all littoral States to turn it into a zone of peace and stability, free from all international tension and conflict. Yemen also advocated the strengthening of peace, security and development among the States of the Mediterranean area, which should be made an area of security, peace and development.

22. The Middle East was on the threshold of a new era; Yemen supported the agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel but believed that Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons posed a threat to peace and security in the area.

23. Mr. ETEFFA (Ethiopia) said that with the end of the cold war and East-West confrontation, there was reason to hope for relative peace, security and stability. However, recent developments in some parts of the world had cast a shadow on expectations for a better world. The unchecked production, acquisition and transfer of weapons of mass destruction continued to have catastrophic potential to destroy human civilization.

24. However, the progress made in the field of disarmament was encouraging. Ethiopia was one of the original signatories of the Chemical Weapons Convention and looked forward to its entry into force in due course. It was also encouraged that the Conference on Disarmament had decided to begin negotiations on a CTBT; and hoped that all nuclear-weapon States would engage in test-ban negotiations so as to facilitate the early adoption of a universal, indefinite and verifiable test-ban treaty.

25. Ethiopia supported the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT beyond 1995. In addition, effective and binding international arrangements should be concluded to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

26. The efforts to bring about the denuclearization of Africa were showing progress; Ethiopia welcomed the measures taken by the United Nations to assist the Group of Experts working on the treaty.

27. The relationship between disarmament, development and international security needed to be properly addressed. A new world order could be achieved only if the complementarity of peace and security with development was recognized and made functional in the process of international economic cooperation. Justice, security, peace and development were interdependent, and the agenda of the future should concentrate on collective development and collective security with international manpower and material used for destruction being turned to construction.

28. In order to deal comprehensively with disarmament and international security, attention must also be given to intra-State conflicts. Although it might be inappropriate to discuss such conflicts in detail in the First Committee, they could not be ignored. Mechanisms must be developed to deal with those sensitive but pressing issues before they become full-scale wars, and it seemed to his delegation that peacemaking intervention or preventive diplomacy was the most effective way to deal with them in terms of the cost in human lives and material.

29. Continuing and emerging political disorders and lack of security and stability in many parts of Africa were claiming thousands of lives, and more concrete and timely measures in cooperation with the parties directly concerned were needed in order to halt such disturbing developments before it was too late. In that regard, the Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) on the establishment within OAU of a mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution was a positive step.

(Mr. Eteffa, Ethiopia)

30. There had also been other positive developments, such as the agreement reached to hold multiracial and democratic elections in South Africa, the lifting of the economic sanctions against that country with the full consent of the parties directly concerned, and the landmark agreement recently signed by Israel and the PLO. In conclusion, he reaffirmed the need for the international community to remain resolutely committed to maintaining international peace and security and to building on its achievements in the field of disarmament.

31. Mr. TURAY (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation welcomed the successful conclusion of the START I and START II negotiations and hoped that they would lead to ever greater cooperation between the Russian Federation and the United States in achieving further decisive reduction of their nuclear arsenals. As a signatory to the NPT, Sierra Leone remained committed to its provisions. There was, however, considerable support for the view that the Treaty should be amended in order to make it more universally accepted, and the 1995 review conference would provide an opportunity to take that view into account. Effective international arrangements must also be put into place to provide assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, for only then could some countries turn away from the acquisition of nuclear capability. His delegation also welcomed the recent conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and hoped that agreement could be reached on a CTBT by 1994.

32. The proliferation of conventional arms was of primary importance to many developing countries, and in his delegation's view, attention should be focused on the question of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military arsenals and procurement through national production, and on the enhancement of openness and transparency in that field, especially through the use of the Register of Conventional Arms. While transparency, restraint, responsible policies and good-neighbourly behaviour were essential elements in increasing regional and global security and peace, it had clearly become imperative for the international community to address seriously the issue of conventional arms transfers, as well as the question of land-mines.

33. His delegation was committed to the concepts of nuclear-free zones and zones of peace, and believed that their importance to the future safety of the environment should not be underestimated. It was in that context that the issue should be considered, with a view to making the establishment of such zones universal.

34. His delegation supported expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament so as to achieve greater geographical balance, thus reflecting present-day realities. It also believed that the time had come to rationalize the work of the First Committee and favoured the full merger of disarmament and international security issues and consolidated consideration and action on all resolutions.

35. Mr. RIVERO (Cuba) welcomes the progress made over the past year on matters of disarmament and international security, including the conclusion of the START II Agreement, the decision by the Conference on Disarmament to begin negotiations for a CTBT, the conclusion of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, the continued work on the future organization of the prohibition of chemical weapons and on means of verification of the ban on biological weapons and on the

(Mr. Rivero, Cuba)

expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. Proposals had also been made concerning cessation of the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons which might lead to placing the nuclear material derived from already-destroyed nuclear weapons under international control.

36. In spite of those advances, however, there remained some vestiges of the cold war and new problems which would have to be resolved in order to make further progress towards disarmament, peace and security. Other situations, some of them antedating the cold war, such as the continued existence of foreign military bases on the territory of independent countries, remained to be eliminated if a spirit of peace and security was really to reign.

37. One of the issues relating to disarmament and security of greatest importance to the international community was that of the complete prohibition of nuclear tests. Hard work on that question was required both in the Conference on Disarmament and in the preparatory work for the NPT review conference, which should aim at establishing a regime for nuclear weapons similar to that already established for other weapons of mass destruction such as chemical and biological weapons. The preparatory work should take into account the points of view of the entire international community as well as the relationship of the complete prohibition of nuclear tests to security guarantees, the cessation of the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and their destruction.

38. The changes taking place in the United Nations mirrored those taking place in the world. It was important however, for Member States to control those changes in the Organization rather than allow them to be imposed by events. Thus, the First Committee had requested the Secretary-General earlier in the year to strengthen the disarmament staff of the Secretariat, and an effort had been made to do so. It had also decided that it should continue to deal with disarmament and the related questions of international security. It should not allow itself to be diverted from those decisions by mere changes in nomenclature such as those provided for in General Assembly resolution 47/120 B. Moreover, much remained to be done with regard to disarmament, and the First Committee's agenda should not be burdened with matters such as peace-keeping and other new concepts which would be discussed in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly.

39. Mr. AL-FAIHANI (Bahrain) said that although a few years had elapsed since the end of the cold war era, the world continued to suffer from its consequences; massive stockpiles of missiles, nuclear warheads and other weapons of mass destruction continued to pose a threat to security. The painful events that had taken place in some countries over past years as a result of the end of the cold war had put the new world order to the test. Social, economic, religious, ethnic and civil conflicts had become a distinguishing mark of the post-cold-war era. The events taking place in Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Caucasus and other parts of the world required concerted efforts to avoid a broader conflagration. The abundance of weapons of mass destruction in the world, particularly nuclear weapons, constituted potential fuel for any future conflagration. The international community, and especially States with arsenals of weapons of mass destruction, must therefore take serious steps to eliminate those weapons so as to ensure world stability.

(Mr. Al-Faihani, Bahrain)

40. The world had witnessed many achievements in the field of disarmament, with the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the ratification of the NPT by Belarus and the initiation of the preparatory process for the extension of NPT. The decision by the Conference on Disarmament to give its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty was another important step in an area of vital importance for international security. Bahrain hoped that the consultations on the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament would be successful.

41. In view of the importance of international efforts for non-proliferation through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Bahrain welcomed the full implementation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the initiatives taken by some States. It also welcomed the progress made towards the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

42. In recent years, initiatives had been taken in the Middle East to turn it into a region free from weapons of mass destruction and to declare it a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Those initiatives would be important in achieving stability in the region and would also make it possible to concentrate on scientific, social and economic development and achieve greater cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, while releasing funds and energies that were sorely needed. Bahrain called on Israel to accede to and ratify the NPT, and to open its nuclear facilities to international inspection.

43. The report "An Agenda for Peace" was a cornerstone in the concept of international security. Bahrain believed that one of the most important ways of safeguarding international security was through preventive diplomacy and the preventive deployment of United Nations forces. International security and world peace were mutually complementary: there could be no security without peace, and no peace without security. Peace-keeping and peacemaking depended primarily on the political will of the parties to a conflict; in the absence of that will, peace would always be threatened. Despite its setbacks in the past, the United Nations, in view of its expertise, broad vision and competent professionalism, would remain the appropriate forum for conducting negotiations on international peace and security. However, the actual maintenance of international peace and security could only be achieved with the political will of States.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.